

# ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

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## UNITED STATES

## Churchmen Continue to Protest against Racial Incidents

With school integration in Little Rock's troubled Central High School entering its second week, Southern church leaders - clergymen and laymen - continue to oppose the action of Arkansas Governor Orval E. Faubus.

Forty members of the Little Rock and North Little Rock Council of Church Women adopted a resolution saying they were "shocked and dismayed at Governor Faubus' use of troops to defy the order of the federal court instead of upholding the law of the land". The women said the tense situation at Central High School would not have arisen if the school board had been allowed to "carry out its plan for compliance with the law".

The use of the Arkansas National Guard to halt integration was also condemned by the Hot Springs Ministerial Alliance in a resolution signed by all white ministers. The group voted to invite Negro pastors to an October 14 meeting to discuss a proposal for consolidating the white and Negro ministerial groups.

Preaching in Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Little Rock, Dean Charles A. Higgins said that if Christ visited Little Rock "He might see a situation similar to the one He faced in Galilee".

The Board of Managers of the United Church Women of Arkansas said that four pre-segregation laws enacted by the state legislature this year "are embittering and are delaying adjustments which eventually must and should be made. We believe in the right of persons to disagree", the women said, "but no state has the power to enact laws which limit the God-given rights of the individual." They expressed their "great concern over recent events which have taken place in our state".

Meanwhile, Governor Faubus took note of the criticism of the church leaders and defended his action, adding that "it is true that some ministers have criticised me, but these same ministers would have been the first to condemn me for not having the courage to carry out my sworn duty to preserve the peace". The governor said he is not opposing integration as such and pointed out that at least seven public



school districts in Arkansas are integrated. "We have integrated all state colleges", he said. "The University has been integrated for some time. We feel we have made progress, and this past week - while all this was going on in Little Rock - three more schools were integrated." (His son, Farrell, has entered an integrated school - Arkansas Tech.)

In other developments on the changing racial scene in the United States:

Twenty-six Florida Methodist clergymen and laymen met in Daytona Beach for an interracial leadership conference. Discussion topics included "The Scientific Approach to Human Relations", "The Official Position of the Methodist Church", and "The Changing Situation in Florida and the Methodist Responsibility in Light of the Facts".

The Catawba Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church USA "deplored" incidents which led to the withdrawal of a 15-year-old Negro girl from a previously all-white high school in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Birmingham (Alabama) presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern) expressed deep regret over recent "inflammatory incidents" between whites and Negroes and called upon its members and Christians of all denominations "to join in a united approach to this common problem".

First Presbyterian Church in Chicago, the city's oldest Protestant church, will have two ministers - one white and one Negro - starting October 20. This month, Normal Park Baptist Church, Chicago, held its first integrated service under two new co-ministers, one Negro and the other white.

Dr. Charles M. Sexton, a Negro, has been named pastor of the all-white Methodist church in Champlin, Minnesota. Until last December Dr. Sexton was pastor of Border Methodist Church, a Negro congregation which merged with Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church in Minneapolis, a previously all-white congregation.

E.P.S., Geneva

## SWITZERLAND

## Archbishop on Old Catholics' Ecumenical Task

Archbishop Andreas Rinkel of Utrecht has outlined what he believes to be the task of the Old Catholic churches within the ecumenical movement. Addressing the Old Catholic Congress held at Rheinfelden, Switzerland (see EPS No. 36), the archbishop said that, from the point of view of a Catholic, the quest for unity was the fundamental task of the World Council of Churches. He referred gratefully to the "amazing developments" in inter-church aid and the work of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs since 1940, but declared that "the simple believer" expects the ecumenical movement to serve the One Holy Church.

In an analysis of the basis of the World Council of Churches - "a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" - the Old Catholic leader called for further definition of what the phrase means. He said he agreed that "Jesus Christ is at the centre of the movement", but believed the present basis should be "developed in the sens of the Nicene creed", or "otherwise it was liable to be treated as only a diplomatic formula".

The primary task of making the reality of the One Holy Catholic Church visible is in danger of being pushed into the background and being remitted to the Faith and Order Department as a single section of the WCC, in Archbishop Rinkel's view. "For the Old Catholic, Faith and Order is the most important section", he told the congress. "We profit from inter-church aid, but we can contribute to Faith and Order by holding fast to the Catholic tradition", he said.



"We must see that the primary calling of the ecumenical movement does not get side-tracked, and that it does not become a pan-protestant movement", he warned.

Archbishop Rinkel claimed that the Old Catholic must "want the Protestant to return to the pre-reformation Church", but in spite of regretting the Reformation, the Old Catholic had "gratefully to acknowledge that it is thanks to this breach that he has found his own way back." He said the Catholic was still "learning daily from the Reformation".

Among practical problems calling for more consideration by his communion, Dr. Rinkel emphasised intercommunion. He urged closer study of the Church of South India, the negotiations between Anglican and Presbyterian churches in England and Scotland, and intercommunion agreements between Anglicanism and the churches of Scandinavia. "We are not justified in giving a categorical 'no'", he declared, reviewing the South India "assumption of the episcopal office in the form practised in the episcopal church and the consecration of priests by the bishops - a sort of long-range catholicising". He said there was a deeper motive than "simply to make a theological inquiry into the absolute purity of the ministry and the genuine catholicity of the Church" and that this motive was "to discover God's purpose for His Church, and what He want us to do".

"I am not saying that I personally agree with this way", the archbishop observed. "I only want to ask whether it is not possible with God to bring about perfection through what is imperfect."

E.P.S., Geneva

#### UNITED STATES

#### Church World Service Leader Criticises Immigration Bill

The emergency immigration bill passed by the U.S. Congress is a "sad let-down" for the more than 30,000 Hungarians now in the United States, according to Dr. R. Norris Wilson, executive director of Church World Service. Because Congress failed to amend present laws and practices, the Hungarian refugees may be deported at any time, he said.

"We welcomed these courageous people, and the government gave them the doubtful status of 'parolees'. But as parolees these young people - the flower of their nation's youth - have no rights whatever. And according to present laws they are in danger of being seized and deported at any time."

Dr. Wilson said that 6,000 refugees had been resettled in the U.S. through Church World Service, and consequently the organisation is "deeply concerned at the deportation threat that hangs over their heads. The position in which the United States has put the Hungarian refugees is in fact un-American and untenable. We can only hope that the Congress very early in the next session will take steps necessary to correct this ambiguous status of the Hungarian parolees and give them their ordinary, common rights."

E.P.S., Geneva

#### EGYPT

#### Nasser Told of "Discrimination against Christians"

(The Hague) - Christians in Egypt have protested to President Nasser against an alleged "policy of discrimination and injustice" which is aimed against them. The Catholic Press Bureau in Holland (K.N.P.) states that representatives of the Coptic Patriarchate, of the Patriarchate of the Uniate Church and representatives of Egyptian Protestantism have sent a joint letter to the Egyptian president, condemning unlawful acts involving discrimination against Christians. The protest was made "in the name of freedom, equality and human dignity, which are guaranteed



by the laws of God, the Declaration of Human Rights and the revolutionary bases of the Egyptian State".

Egyptian Christians complain especially about restrictions which virtually prevent any new church building being erected. They protest because church marriage laws are disregarded, Christian schools are being closed, Christians are being removed from the governing bodies of Christian schools, and there is discrimination against Christians who apply for state positions and posts in private business.

Other grievances are that Christians have been ignored in the distribution of land under the new agrarian reform, Christian broadcasts on the Egyptian radio have virtually stopped, church property has begun to be confiscated, and changes in the law menace the social work of the churches.

E.P.S., Geneva

#### UNITED STATES

#### Roman Catholic View of Faith and Order Conference

A Roman Catholic observer has commented that although the denominations represented at the North American Faith and Order Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, last month, did not move closer to the Roman Catholic Church, "yet we can bear witness to the Pope's dictum that in the ecumenical movement, there is a manifestation of the inspiration from the Holy Ghost".

This is the opinion of a Roman Catholic unofficial observer at the Oberlin conference (see EPS Nos. 34, 35), Father Gustave Weigel, theology professor from Woodstock (Maryland) College. An interview with Father Weigel and Father John Sheerin, who also was an observer at the conference, was published in the September 13 issue of "Catholic Universe Bulletin".

Father Weigel said that "no new approach to the position of the Catholic church was achieved" but that "there is a great degree of unity in the language used". He noted that "the language is closer to the language which would be used by Catholics. Unfortunately one gets the impression that the understanding of this language is not at all identical in the different users."

The priest said he "felt not only a 'timidity' by the delegates about being precise, but actually a preference 'to keep the words fluid', hoping that in time a more precise meaning can be attached". From the Catholic point of view, according to Father Weigel, "the basic difficulty seems to be that all the participants in the conference take it for granted that they are in the Church of Jesus Christ". This position is denied by Catholics, "yet this basic question is never faced openly and directly".

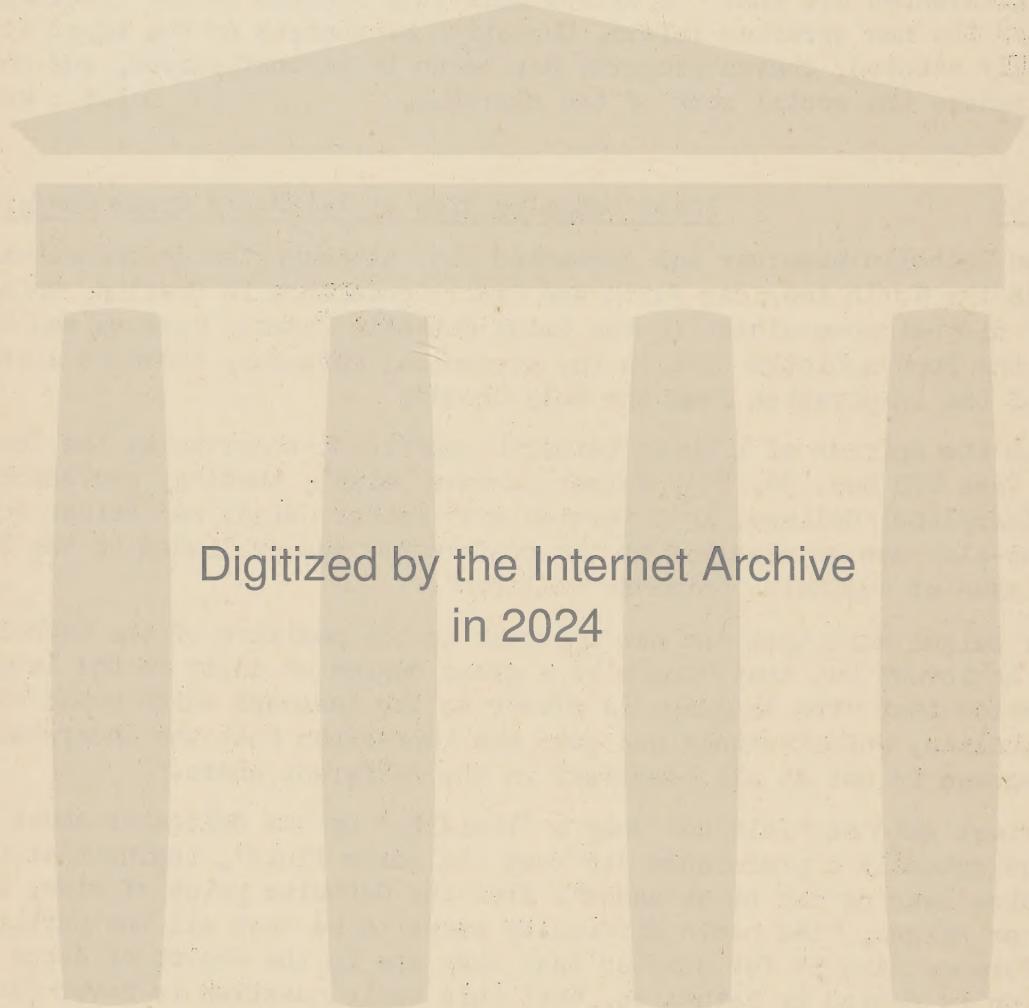
Commenting on the article, the Rt. Rev. Angus Dun, Protestant Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C., and chairman of the conference, said that ecumenical leaders have understood "with sorrow the unreadiness of the Roman Catholic Church to enter into the discussion, lest the position of the church be compromised. Therefore, we are happy that even this measure of unofficial presence has been made possible... We are hopeful that such attendance will be repeated. We are perfectly sure that reconciliation can never be effected by people who never meet."

E.P.S., Geneva

#### CANADA

#### Anglican and United Church Leaders Prepare Union Plan

Anglican and United Church of Canada leaders have prepared an outline of a union scheme, according to a report made by Anglican Bishop John H. Dixon to the executive council of his church's General Synod. He said that the plan would not



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be given any publicity until it has been studied by a group of Anglican theologians. After that, he said, the scheme will be published unofficially and circulated as widely as possible.

Bishop Dixon said that there is "a terrible apathy" among many members of the Anglican Church of Canada in regard to union. "There is even a lack of any sense of sin about this apathy", he told the council.

Later, Bishop Godfrey P. Gower declared that the union would "centre around the rock of the episcopacy and might founder on it". But, he continued, the Anglican Church must be "clear and honest about this issue because otherwise talks with other churches might go on and on and get nowhere". E.P.S., Geneva

#### GERMANY

#### Church Buildings Seen as "Quiet Zones"

(Berlin) - A Hamburg architect, Mr. Gerhard Langmaack, who has designed a number of contemporary churches, has urged city planners of the future to think of church buildings as quiet zones, "islands of peace", and to make special provision for them.

He told 800 architects attending the ninth Conference for Protestant Church Architecture, meeting in Berlin (see EPS No. 31), that domestic architecture had already moved in this direction. The trend was to place houses where people could live in peace and quiet, away from places of work, education and entertainment. Church buildings, he declared, should form similar centres for meditation and unhurried meeting between people. Town planning should be seen by the churches as an opportunity for active steps to achieve this goal, according to Mr. Langmaack, who said church participation in long-range projects could lead to "a new positive attitude toward the Christian task in the world".

The conference was attended by participants from Germany, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland and Italy. Its working committee, directed by Dr. Oskar Söhngen of Berlin, publishes the periodical "Kunst und Kirche" (Art and the Church).

E.P.S., Geneva

#### In Brief

A Baptist Union of Italy has been formed, placing the administration of Italian Baptist cooperative affairs almost entirely in the hands of Italian churchmen. The new union consists of 57 churches and 41 preaching stations. Baptist work was begun in Italy in 1863 by English missionaries, who were followed by Southern Baptists (USA) in 1870.

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An editorial in the Colombia liberal newspaper, "El Tiempo", has hailed Interior Minister Jose Maria Villareal's assurance that Protestant groups will have full freedom of assembly and worship (see EPS No. 36). The paper said that "the whole world knows that the great majority of Colombians are Catholics", but it "should be made equally clear that any Colombian also has a perfect right to be an Anabaptist, a Brahman, a Presbyterian or a Buddhist".

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Professor Joseph Szczepkowski was elected superintendent of the Methodist Church in Poland at its Annual Conference last month. Twenty-one candidates for the ministry were ordained by Bishop Ferdinand Sigg, of Zurich, Switzerland, who was making a fraternal visit to Poland.

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A six-member Mennonite Central Committee agricultural and medical team has opened a rehabilitation project at Tobelo on the island of Halmahera, one of the "spice islands" of northeast Indonesia. The Christian community on Halmahera, made up of a third of the island's population, is an outgrowth of work by Dutch missionaries begun in 1866. Now independent, the 35,000-member Christian church of Halmahera/Morotai appealed to the Indonesian Council of Churches for help, and the arrangement with the Mennonites was worked out.

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During the next nine months, the Rev. Eberhard Bethge, for many years in charge of the German Evangelical community at Forest Hill, London, will be at Harvard University in the United States, collating letters and memoranda of the late Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed for his part in the wartime plot to overthrow Hitler. Pastor Bethge, a colleague of Bonhoeffer, has already edited various posthumous publications of the German leader.

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Delegates to the fourteenth General Assembly of the United Student Christian Council, meeting in Wooster, Ohio, urged President Eisenhower to declare an 18-month moratorium on atomic weapons testing. The resolution was in response to a letter from Japanese student Christians requesting that the USCC seek to end the testing of atomic weapons. The resolution pledged the students to work for a permanent end to the tests. Two officials of the World Council of Churches addressed the delegates - Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary, and the Rev. Philip Potter of the Youth Department.

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Additional gifts to aid victims of a disastrous flood in West Pakistan (see EPS No. 36) have been forwarded to the area by the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches. Churches in the Netherlands have sent \$2,000, the United Kingdom, \$1,400, Sweden, \$1,970, New Zealand, \$1,000. In addition, Church World Service, relief arm of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., has shipped 40 tons of cottonseed oil, valued at \$16,000, medicines worth \$5,000 and blankets valued at \$2,600. The flood left 600,000 persons homeless and devastated 5,000 square miles of land.

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An international Comenius Conference attended by 50 scholars from many countries was recently held in Prague to study the life and work of the great 17th century theologian and educationist Johann Amos Comenius.

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In Sofia, Patriarch Cyril of the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria and Patriarch Alexius of Moscow have signed a joint appeal calling for the prohibition of the manufacture, use and testing of atomic weapons. They affirm that until this aim is attained, the production of atom-bombs and further atom-bomb testing should be stopped.

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A delegation of Hungarian Protestants is visiting Protestant churches in China, at the invitation of the "Three-Self-Movement" within the churches, which aims at independence and self-support.

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Fifty students, both men and women, from the USA will spend a month working in German Protestant hospitals, and in building chapels, churches and youth homes as a form of social service. The work is being done out of "gratitude to the great country of Christian social service" and without financial help from Germany. Funds for their travel and accommodation have been contributed by churches in America.

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Forty Christians who attended the "Third World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, and for Disarmament" in Tokio (August 6-16) appealed to Christians all over the world "to oppose the manufacture and use of all weapons of mass destruction in their countries, and to support one another in this common task". The appeal, which follows up previous statements of the Japanese churches and the Evangelical Church in Germany to the problem of atomic weapons, is signed by Dr. Michio Kozaki (president of the National Christian Council of Japan), by Toyohiko Kagawa and other leaders.

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The National Evangelical Convention of Mexico, which includes Congregationalists, Reformed, Baptists, Methodists, Disciples, Episcopalians, Nazarenes and Pentecostalists, is holding its sixtieth annual rally from October 1-6 in Veracruz. This year's theme is "The Task of Evangelism - Christ's Commission", and evening evangelistic meetings centre around the slogan "Pray together, Help Each Other, Cooperate".

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The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, has spoken "very positively of the results of the recent Lutheran World Federation Assembly in Minneapolis", according to Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, LWF executive secretary. Dr. Lund-Quist officially notified the Missouri Synod of the Federation's "hope" that it will reconsider an invitation to join the LWF. He reported that he expects the synod's unity committee to re-examine its stand opposing membership. E.P.S., Geneva

